

Teacher Guide to What I Want to Be When I Grow Up

Combine an activity about careers with a chance to try one on for size!

Overview

On **October 31**, students in schools throughout America will be dressing up as an adult leader or professional they admire. This can be an opportunity for students to learn more about how these professionals spend their days in the working world.

Use this guide to spark your thinking on classroom activities. There is also a sample letter to parents, ready to customize or photocopy.

What I Want to Be When I Grow Up was pioneered throughout Louisiana's Cajun Heartland School-to-Work partnership. This successful three-year initiative has provided a simple and effective way to help students begin to explore the world of work...and has created an enjoyable educational activity at the same time.

What I Want to Be When I Grow Up is a program for teachers and students sponsored by the Job Shadow Day Coalition.

Six suggestions for activities to make this Halloween fun, safe, and educational for your students:

- Work with students to develop a **What I Want to Be When I Grow Up** mini-project where students learn what it takes (education, training, knowledge) to succeed in a particular career.
- Create and assist students in designing props and/or costumes so that each student can dress up on Halloween (or the designated day) for their dream job.
- Design a creative unit that asks students to draw pictures of their chosen profession, or helps them develop poems or stories in which they imagine what it would be like to work in a certain job.
- Draw on parents and community leaders to participate in the program as guest speakers. Any number of professionals, be it a coach, policeman, or IT professional, can bring in props to help kids visualize different jobs.
- Create a game in which the class lists as many careers as possible, writes them on the board, and comes up with corresponding (easy-to-find) components of a costume. Put the career names in a hat and ask each student to pick one of the careers to try on "my day in the shoes of _____."
- Create a contest among classes or within the class to encourage maximum participation. The winner could receive a pizza party or something related to a career (e.g., basketball tickets for an athlete, free lunch for a chef).

Sample Letter for Parents/Guardians

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Halloween is just around the corner! This year we're joining schools across the country in planning a new way for students to participate in a "**dress-up day**."

On **October 31**, we are encouraging students to dress as **What I Want to Be When I Grow Up**. The idea is to give the children an activity that's fun, safe, and educational. They'll dress up for a job or as a person they admire, and learn more about the career they've chosen. Costumes for **What I Want to Be When I Grow Up** don't have to be elaborate. For example, items such as briefcases, hard hats, badges, and first aid kits can easily transform a child into a lawyer, construction worker, police officer, or doctor for a day.

We hope the day will be fun for the students and spark some interesting discussion about careers. If you have any questions, please call me at school.

Sincerely,